

CLAIMS:

1. An electric starter for a trimmer having a cutting head at its lower end and powered by an internal combustion engine, the starter comprising:
 - an electric motor; and
 - a cutting head engaging structure in mechanical communication with said electric motor,

5 said cutting head engaging structure being adapted to engage said cutting head of said trimmer.
2. The electric starter of claim 1 wherein said electric starter further comprises a housing, said cutting head engaging structure is locked to a shaft extending from a housing, said shaft being in mechanical communication with said electric motor.
3. The electric starter of claim 2 wherein said shaft has a non-circular cross section, said cutting head engaging structure having a mating hole into which said shaft extends, thereby preventing relative rotation between said cutting head engaging structure and said shaft.
4. The electric starter of claim 1 wherein said electric motor is part of an electric circuit including a power switch for selectively opening and closing said electric circuit.
5. The electric starter of claim 4 further comprising a housing, wherein said power switch includes a pedal, said pedal extending from said housing such that when said pedal is depressed, said power switch closes and when said pedal is released, said power switch opens.
6. The electric starter of claim 4 further comprising a pressure-sensing means, said pressure-sensing means automatically activating said electric motor in response to pressure being sensed against said cutting head engaging structure.
7. The electric starter of claim 6 wherein said pressure-sensing means comprises a momentary switch and a motor mount, said motor mount allowing said limited movement of said electric motor along its axis, said momentary switch being closed in response to said motor being pushed down in response to a force being applied to said cutting head engaging structure.

7. The electric starter of claim 4 further comprising an electric reversing switch, said electric reversing switch operable to cause said electric motor to reverse directions.

8. The electric starter of claim 7 wherein said electric motor runs on direct current and said reversing switch reverses the polarity the voltage applied to said electric motor.

9. The electric starter of claim 1 further comprising a torque transmitting means placing said electric motor in said mechanical communication with said cutting head engaging structure.

10. The electric starter of claim 9 wherein said torque transmitting means includes a reversing function that selectively and mechanically reverses a direction of rotation of the cutting head gripping structure with respect to a direction of rotation of said electric motor.

11. The electric starter of claim 10 wherein said reversing function includes selectively engaging one of a plurality of gears.

12. The electric starter of claim 9 wherein said torque transmitting means includes a speed reducing function that reduces the turning ratio of the cutting head engaging structure to the electric motor.

13. The electric starter of claim 9 wherein said torque transmitting means includes an output shaft extending from said electric motor, said cutting head engaging structure being fixed directly to said output shaft.

14. A method for starting an engine of a trimmer, the method comprising: engaging a cutting head at a lower end of said trimmer with a cutting head engaging structure of an electric starter.

15. The method of claim 14 further comprising turning on the electric starter, said turning on the electric starter comprising depressing a pedal extending from said electric starter.

16. The method of claim 14 further comprising turning on the electric starter, said turning on the electric starter comprising applying a downward force to said cutting head engaging structure with said trimmer.